Resemiotising concerns from constituencies in the South African parliament

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Abstract: Members of Parliament (MPs) in South Africa represent different constituencies across the country. In this article, we report on how MPs resemiotise concerns from their constituencies in spoken discourse in a parliamentary committee, and on the effectiveness with which this information is in turn resemiotised into a written committee report. Both resemiotisations form part of a genre chain which we investigated while conducting a linguistic ethnography of the communication difficulties which occur in parliament's committee process. We use a multi-stranded theoretical foundation, including tools from Systemic Functional Linguistics, Interactional Sociolinguistics and Legitimation Code Theory to analyse MPs' ability to communicate concerns from their constituencies in parliamentary discourse. We conclude that the success of MPs' resemiotisations of these concerns depends on their ability to rescale them as relevant on a national level, and on their ability to negotiate the power relations at play in parliament.

Introduction

Parliaments are institutional spaces in which people from a wide range of backgrounds gather to discuss and make decisions on matters of national significance. Even though South African MPs are elected by means of proportional representation by party, rather than through a constituency-based electoral system, members are assigned by their parties to represent specific geographical areas as their constituencies (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2006). In representing these constituencies, MPs must use their linguistic resources skilfully to 'translate' local concerns into language that will be understood and taken seriously on the national stage of parliament. This article describes what linguistic resources are involved in this process, viewing it as a process of resemiotisation that involves rescaling. In this section, we frame this description by describing the concepts of resemiotisation and rescaling, and their relevance to parliament, before introducing the questions that guided this research and describing the multi-stranded theoretical background we have used to provide an impression of how well MPs represent their constituencies.

Resemiotisation in parliament

The research reported on in this article arose from an ethnographic study of the committee system of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. In this study we examined how effectively information is communicated through chains of texts, using a variety of modalities, which we have labelled *genre chains*, using Fairclough's (2003) terminology. We were particularly interested in the ways in which knowledge is taken out of its original context and placed in a new one (that is, *recontextualised*) between texts in these genre chains (Bernstein 2003). In recent years, the multimodal nature of much recontextualisation has increasingly become recognised, resulting in the coining of the term *resemiotisation* to refer to the ways in which 'meaning making shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next' (Iedema 2003: 41). The concept of resemiotisation is useful in this because it places emphasis on how MPs take material, lived experiences in constituencies and encode them in spoken words in a committee meeting. In this article, then, we use 'resemiotisation' to refer to instances of recontextualisation from one mode of semiosis to another, while using the superordinate term 'recontextualisation' for instances where knowledge is repeated in the same mode.

Rescaling in parliament

The resemiotisation of concerns from parliamentary constituencies not only crosses modalities, but also geographic space, as matters from all parts of the country are brought into the context of parliament in Cape Town. Our attention was drawn to the significance of this spatial dimension through the work of a number of sociolinguists who have become increasingly interested in the ways in which migration and globalisation affect people's communicative practices (e.g. Collins, Slembrouck and Baynham 2009). These scholars, working on what can be called the 'sociolinguistics of globalisation' (Blommaert 2010) illustrate the importance of geography, broadly conceived, to good linguistic and ethnographic research. One of the ways in which they do this is through use of the concepts of *scale* and *rescaling*.

Kell (2009) studies resemiotisation in genre chains related to local residents' involvement in a self-help housing project in Cape Town. In these genre chains, residents must resemiotise their concerns about their housing at ever-larger scales in order to receive the assistance they need in building their houses, moving in 'meaning-making trajectories' (2009: 259) from local discussions in their new neighbourhood to presentations at meetings of national organisations or consultations with city planners. This type of resemiotisation from one scale to another can be termed rescaling. Stroud and Mpendukana (2009: 368) use the word 'rescaling' also to refer to resemiotisation in the opposite direction, from globalised discourses or texts to more localised ones.

In order to ensure that concerns from their constituencies are recontextualised through the parliamentary process and eventually acted upon, MPs must rescale these concerns to convince their listeners that they are relevant on a national scale. In this article we examine the effectiveness with which two MPs are able to do this.

Outline of research

There are two main research questions that we answer in this article:

1. In what ways do MPs resemiotise concerns from their constituencies in parliamentary committee meetings?
2. What factors affect the effectiveness with which concerns from MPs' constituencies are resemiotised in the parliamentary committee process?

To answer these research questions, we have used a multi-stranded theoretical foundation which allows us to arrive at as accurate a view of resemiotisation and rescaling in parliament as possible, and to make recommendations as to how concerns from constituencies can be resemiotised more effectively in parliament so as to further the cause of representative democracy. In the following section we describe how recontextualisation is bound up with relations of power. Thereafter, we show how Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) and aspects of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly Martin's (1993) work on grammatical metaphor, provide languages of description for what happens to the packaging of knowledge in the resemiotisation process.

In the third section, we describe parliament as a complex research context before explaining how data for this study was collected and analysed, using linguistic ethnography as an overarching framework, along with some aspects of critical ethnography. Linguistic ethnography is by definition an interdisciplinary way of doing research, lending itself to use in a multi-stranded theoretical foundation such as that used in this study. We describe how we conducted ethnographic observation in parliament and gained participants' perspectives on the interaction through interactional sociolinguistic interviews. Finally, we show how we have used LCT and SFL in the analysis of our data. Figure 1 gives a diagrammatic overview of the multi-stranded theoretical foundation we have used in this research. It also gives the numbers of the sections of the article in which each is introduced and explained. In each of these sections, the relationships between the different frameworks used and the role of each framework are described in detail, demonstrating why such a wide variety of frameworks is necessary to provide the perspective from which we conducted this study. As is clear from Figure 1, different frameworks will be more salient than others at different points in the article.

In the fourth section, we answer the two research questions listed above by comparing two concerns raised by two different MPs to examine how they were resemiotised through the committee process. Our aim is not to give a comprehensive inventory of ways in which MPs raise concerns from their
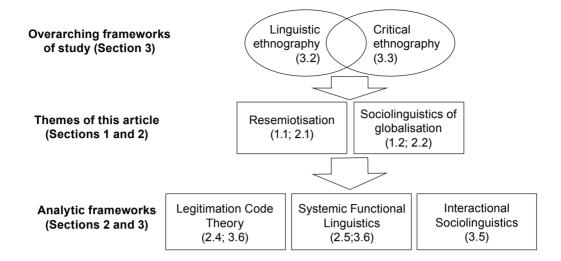
Overarching frameworks of study (Section 3)	Linguistic ethnography (3.2)	Critical ethnography (3.3)	
Themes of this article (Sections 1 and 2)	Resemiotisation (1.1; 2.1)	Sociolinguistics of globalisation (1.2; 2.2)	
Analytic frameworks (Sections 2 and 3)	Legitimation Code Theory (2.4; 3.6)	Systemic Functional Linguistics (2.5;3.6)	Interactional Sociolinguistics (3.5)

Figure 1: The multi-stranded theoretical foundation used in this article

constituencies in parliament, but rather to provide a fine-grained analysis of two examples which demonstrates some of the influences on the effectiveness of MPs' resemiotisations of concerns from their constituency. In keeping with the principles of critical ethnography (May 1997), this is done with a view to finding out how communication in parliament can be improved. The final section gives our findings and recommendations in this respect.

Recontextualisation, power and Semantics
In this section we illustrate two principles on which we draw extensively in our analysis: (1) recontextualisation is required to negotiate access to discourses of power, and (2) recontextualisation occurs in both directions between local, contextualised, concrete, 'lay' discourses and global (or perhaps more accurately, trans-local), decontextualised, abstract, professional discourses (see below).

Recontextualisation and power
Iedema (1999, 2003) sees recontextualisation as constituting institutional discourse through the way in which it legitimises and institutionalises certain meanings. Figure 2 charts how this might occur in the context of a budget drawn up by a South African government department for consideration in parliament. In this process, what begins as ideas in individuals' minds is solidified into official plans set out in tables and figures or printed on glossy paper.

We view the institutionalised meanings encoded by the texts appearing towards the bottom right of Figure 2 as holding epistemological power (Maton and Moore 2010). While traditional critical approaches such as that of Fairclough (2001) tend to focus only on the distribution of social power, a social realist perspective on power argues that it is possible for some knowledge claims to be more 'epistemologically powerful' than others (Maton and Moore 2010: 3).

Research has shown that recontextualisation is a key to accessing resources (Kell 2009) and positions of social power (Scheuer 2011). This is so because effective recontextualisation allows actors to construct epistemologically powerful knowledge claims, because it provides concrete evidence for these claims and shows clearly how this evidence supports them. A good example of an epistemologically powerful knowledge claim is a mathematical theorem, which shows the concrete premises on which the conclusion is based. The relationship between epistemological and social power is a close one: below, we show that an MP with greater social power is able to produce knowledge with greater epistemological power than that produced by a less powerful MP. Conversely, greater epistemological power may confer greater social power on an individual. Thus Maton and Moore (2010)
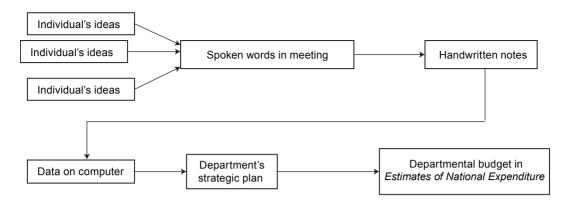
Figure 2: Recontextualisation as institutionalising meaning in a parliamentary committee (adapted from Latour 1987)

observe, along with Foucault (1980) and others, that power is intimately bound up with knowledge, and so epistemology is political.

Legitimation Code Theory

The second principle to be learned from research on recontextualisation is that it often occurs between local, contextualised, concrete, 'lay' discourses and global (or perhaps more accurately, trans-local), decontextualised, abstract, professional discourses. Maton (2011) has developed two useful concepts to describe these two bundles of features in what he calls Semantics, a dimension of LCT. The first is *semantic gravity* (SG), the extent to which knowledge is related to its context. Concrete knowledge which is grounded in the particularities of a local context will have stronger semantic gravity than more abstract, general and trans-local discourses. The second concept is *semantic density* (SD), the extent to which knowledge is condensed into a relatively small number of words or symbols. Professional discourses, because they use more of the shorthand of a particular profession, tend to have stronger semantic density than 'lay' discourses.

Maton (2011) conceives of SD and SG as existing on two independent continua, but since weak SD often correlates with strong SG, and vice versa, at times it is helpful to represent the two as inversely proportional to each other, as illustrated in Figure 3. This diagram helps to summarise all of the features typically associated with weak SG and strong SD (SG-, SD+), and strong SG and weak SD (SG-, SD+), synthesising concepts from LCT with those from the sociolinguistics of globalisation. Maton (2013) refers to the *y* axis on such a diagram as a semantic scale. In this article, we use the word 'rescaling' to represent the process by which strengthening and weakening of SG and SD is accomplished, since in the data we investigated, these moves invariably imply rescaling from a local scale toward a translocal one, or vice versa. Plotting the relative strength and weakness of SG and SD in a particular stretch of text results in a semantic profile, such as that found in Figure 3.

The semantic profile in Figure 3 is considered by Maton (2013) to be an optimal pattern for helping students to move from high-stakes reading to high-stakes writing. The profile follows a wave-like pattern, and so is known as a semantic wave. In this wave, students are introduced to a topic at a strong level of SD, giving a prospective overview of it, and then are brought straight down into the specificities of data at a strong level of SG. Then they should be taught how to relate this data to theory using progressively higher waves of semantic density at progressively higher levels of difficulty, scaffolding their way to the most difficult levels of theoretical engagement. In the fourth section below, we show that a similar wave is also often the most effective way for MPs to resemiotise knowledge from their constituencies in parliament.

Of course, the bundles of features at either end of the semantic scale in Figure 3 are generalisations: one may find highly decontextualised spoken discourse or highly contextualised written discourse, for
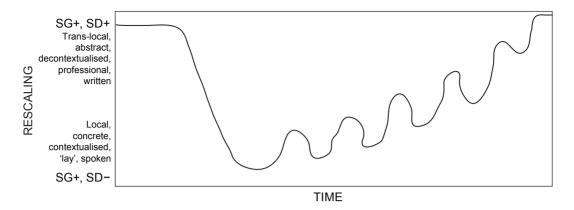
Figure 3: An optimal semantic profile for bridging between high-stakes reading and high-stakes writing (after Maton 2013)

instance. However, a semantic scale is useful in that it can be used to reflect the stylistic repertoire of effective rescalers, like Scheuer (2001)'s successful job candidates and Stroud and Mpendukana's (2009) signwriters.

Nominalisation and grammatical metaphor in Systemic Functional Linguistics

One linguistic process that strengthens SD is nominalisation, the use of nouns to express information usually conveyed by other parts of speech. The following description of nominalisation from a SFL perspective draws on the work of Martin (1993). In most spoken, common-sense discourse, the grammar of the clause is congruent with its meaning: grammatical structures are used to convey the type of meaning they are usually associated with. For example, one may say 'The MPs recommended that the budget be passed', where the process of passing the budget is expressed by the verb 'passed'. However, this example sentence may be resemiotised in writing as 'the MPs' recommendation of the passing of the budget'. In this sentence, there is a tension between the grammar and the meaning of the sentence, in that whereas nouns are usually used to refer to objects, here nouns have been used to refer to what are known in SFL as Processes[1] instead: a 'recommendation' and 'passing'. While there can be only one lexical verb in a clause, there may be many nouns, so this device allows writers to pack many Processes/verbs into the same clause, as well as to modify and compare these as objects.

Grammatical categories that convey circumstantial information, such as adjectives and adverbs, can also be nominalised according to SFL theory: in the phrase 'the immediacy of the passing of the budget', the adverb 'immediately' has been converted into a noun. Conjunctions can undergo nominalisation too (Gerot and Wignell 1994). For example, 'because' in the sentence 'They passed the budget because they thought it was reasonable' can be converted to the noun 'reason' in 'The reason they passed the budget was that they thought it was reasonable'.

Because nominalisation converts various constituents into nouns, it allows greater control over the meanings expressed by those constituents: one is able to modify them using adjectives and express their relationship to other processes in a more economical way than if one were expressing them using verbs in separate clauses. Nominalisation is also well-known for its ability to disguise or remove agency from a text, since a noun, unlike a verb, does not require a subject (Harrison and Young 2005). It is difficult to know at any point to what extent speakers and writers intentionally choose nominalisations for the use of these properties; in many cases, use of nominalisations is so well-established that it is difficult to imagine a specialised discourse type, like parliamentary discourse, existing without them. In this article, we follow the principle from SFL that every choice made in language is meaningful (Bloor and Bloor 2004), and on that basis examine the ways in which nominalisations are used to make meaning.

Martin (1993) demonstrates how nominalisation is a type of grammatical metaphor, which, like all metaphors, works to condense meaning into short stretches of text, strengthening its SD. Just as conventional (lexical) metaphor requires interpreters to think on two levels, the literal and the figurative, so grammatical metaphor requires interpreters to strip away layers of meaning to get from the nominalised expression to a version of it that is grammatically congruent, that is, in which the Process is expressed as a verb, the Circumstance as an Adverbial Group or prepositional phrase, or the logical connector as a conjunction (Bloor and Bloor 2004). Both lexical and grammatical metaphor work to condense meaning into fewer words or symbols. Lexical metaphor does this by associating an aspect of one word's meaning with that of another (e.g. the slowness of a snail with the slowness of surface mail in the expression 'snail-mail'). Grammatical metaphor does the same by making one grammatical structure fulfil the role of another (e.g. shifting the meaning of the Processes 'shock' and 'resign' from verbs in 'the chairperson resigned, which shocked the committee members' to nouns in 'the committee members' shock at the chairperson's resignation'). In both cases, metaphor strengthens the SD of the knowledge being conveyed in the sentence.

SFL's account of grammatical metaphor allows us to understand how SD is enacted in language. This means that SFL provides a good external language of description (Bernstein 2000) allowing us to trace fluctuations of SG and SD in a text, or from one resemiotisation to another along a genre chain. In the following section we show how we have used SFL and LCT in tandem with IS to analyse how MPs resemiotise concerns from their constituencies in a parliamentary committee meeting, after giving a description of the research context and our data collection methods.

Studying resemiotisation in the committee process of the South African parliament
Parliament as a research context
The Parliament of the Republic of South Africa is divided into two houses: the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996). Members of each house are allocated to specific committees in such a way that the composition of each committee by party is broadly representative of that of the house as a whole (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2009). Each government department has a portfolio committee of the NA assigned to oversee it, and our research project focused on a small selection of these portfolio committees. Each portfolio committee has to report its recommendations to plenary sessions of the NA, where these are debated further (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2009).

All sittings of the NA and NCOP are interpreted into all 11 official languages (Tshabalala 2008), but every committee meeting takes place in English. The overwhelming majority of the documentation supplied to MPs for consideration in committee meetings is in English, as are all the minutes and reports written as a result of the meetings.

As mentioned above, these documents and reports as well as the committee meetings themselves are linked in complex genre chains. The genre chain we examined is the budget oversight process, in which departments present their annual budgets and strategic plans to their portfolio committees for approval. Portfolio committees then make a report on these budgets to the National Assembly, including any concerns that their members may have raised about them.

The committee meetings under investigation took place in June and July 2009, less than three months after South Africa's general elections that year, and less than two months after the constituting of the country's fourth democratic parliament. Jacob Zuma had just been elected the new president of South Africa. This meant, among other things, that many members of the committees under examination were new to parliament and its procedures and so were still acquiring the literacy practices of parliament; others were new to the particular committees in which they were serving. In such circumstances, one would expect the MPs' backgrounds prior to their arrival at parliament or their current committees to be particularly salient, since the members of the various committees were still getting to know each other and did not have much experience from their current committees on which to draw. Under such conditions, one could expect there to be plenty of miscommunication in the committee process.

Linguistic ethnography as an overarching framework for research

We have found linguistic ethnography a useful point of view from which to study communication in contexts as complex as parliament, in which diverse participants interact through multiple modes, with many different factors influencing their interaction, from geographic and linguistic backgrounds to considerations of political strategy. Rampton (2007) shows how linguistic ethnography builds on Hymes' (1972) conception of the ethnography of communication by combining it with a variety of linguistic tools of analysis and research movements, some of which, like IS and the New Literacy Studies, were themselves developments on the ethnography of communication. Others, like SFL, were not. Rampton writes that linguistic ethnography tends to apply these tools of analysis particularly to discourse analysis, interested primarily on the relationship between context and discourse. Linguistic ethnography is less a set method for doing research than a set of assumptions which guide the methodological choices made in this study. Drawing on the ethnography of communication, this position

> *generally holds that language and social life are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity.* (Rampton et al. 2004: 2)

Two points of this position hold significance for this study. The first is the belief that 'language and social life are mutually shaping' (Rampton et al. 2004: 2), or, in other words, that language exists in a dynamic relationship with the context in which it occurs. Accepting this allowed us to examine how the micro-context of parliamentary debate, the meso-context of parliament's institutional structure and the macro-context of South Africa's socio-political situation at the time shaped the communication under study. It also allowed us to see how this communication (and its attendant challenges) affects parliament and the country as a whole. Figure 4 offers a diagrammatic representation of these relationships.

A second aspect of the linguistic ethnographers' position which is helpful for research into communication in parliament is its emphasis on 'close analysis of situated language use' (Rampton et al. 2004: 2). Linguistic ethnographers are able to bring a number of sets of linguistic tools to bear on the analysis of the discourse they are interested in (Creese 2008). As already mentioned, we applied three analytical frameworks or sets of tools of analysis to our data in this study, namely aspects of SFL, LCT and IS. These three analytical frameworks function as different 'lenses', each enabling a richer understanding of the brief data extracts reported on below.

Critical ethnography

Our study also draws on elements of critical ethnography (May 1997; Jordan and Yeomans 1995; Magolda 2000) in that it seeks to explore the unequal relations present in parliament and observe the role of different ideologies in reinforcing these power relations. More importantly, our study is critical in that it is oriented to recommending changes which can improve the effectiveness of communication in parliament, and individual MPs' ability to represent their constituencies in an equitable, democratic manner.

Ethnographic observation in parliament

Since we used the notion of a genre chain as a basic unit of study, we decided to follow the progress of four committees of the National Assembly through the genre chain of the budget oversight process. The first author was invited by a high-ranking parliamentary official, the then Director: Legislation and Oversight, to research the effectiveness of communication in parliament's committee process. He spent five weeks in parliament, attending and making audio recordings at as many meetings of the four committees as possible, amounting to a total of ten committee meetings. All parliamentary committees are open to public observers unless there are specific reasons why they should not be, and so the first author was able to attend these meetings as a public observer. Out of these four committees, two were chosen as the main data source for this project, namely the Portfolio Committee on Transport and the Portfolio Committee on Public Works, since the first author was able to observe more of the genre chain of the budget oversight process
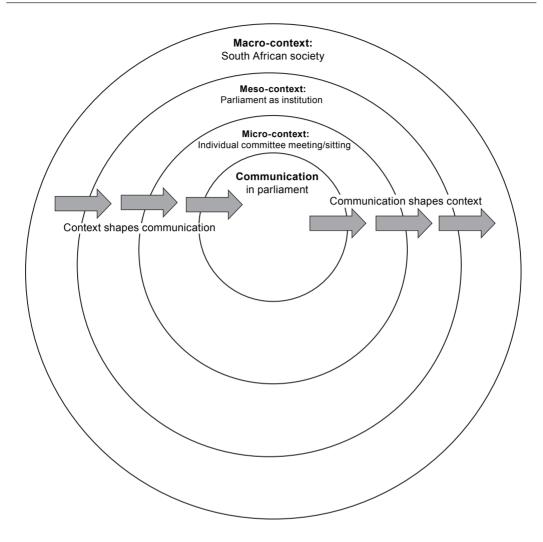
Figure 4: The dynamic relationship between communication and context in the South African parliament

for these two committees over the five weeks spent in parliament than was possible with the other two committees studied. He also received permission to do participant observation in committee secretaries' offices, where the minutes and reports written on these meetings were compiled. Here he assisted the committee secretaries with their work, often editing documents for them or helping them to carry things to and from committee meetings. This participant observation proved invaluable in developing an understanding of parliament as a meso-context and the communicative practices used between different participants in parliamentary committees.

Interactional sociolinguistic interviews
In a second phase of data collection, we elicited participants' perspectives on the interaction in the committee meetings observed, and their interpretations of the written texts surrounding these meetings, particularly the minutes and reports produced and adopted as part of the committee process. For the data reported on in this article, the first author contacted two committee secretaries who were in office during the period over which this data was collected, asking them

to comment on their understanding of the interaction. He also interviewed MPs from the committee reported on in this article, eliciting their understandings of the interaction discussed below. These interviews followed standard practice in interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982), in which snippets of recorded data are played back to participants, and they are asked to comment on possible misunderstandings, their ideas as to what different participants' motivations might have been, their own intentions behind what they said, and any other features that they find to be of interest. The data from these interviews were then incorporated into our analysis, in an effort to achieve a convergence between analysts' and participants' perspectives (Tannen 1984).

Data analysis
The first author's recordings of the committee meetings were transcribed mostly by paid transcriptionists and thereafter edited for accuracy by the first author, who listened to each recording numerous times in the process of analysis.

In the episode described in the following section, we were interested in investigating the effectiveness with which two MPs resemiotised concerns from their constituencies in the committee meeting. In the process and by way of explanation, we drew up semantic profiles (similar to Figure 3) to trace changes in the relative strength of SG and SD in their discourse.

To do this, we identified particular points of inflection which precede rescaling to a different level of SD or SG. Syntactically, these points of inflection tend to take the form of conjunctions (e.g. 'but', 'so'), complementisers (e.g. 'when', 'that') and projecting Processes (e.g. 'She says…', 'I think…') of various kinds. We also analyse particular linguistic features as indicators of stronger levels of SD or SG. As is clear from the preceding discussion, lexical metaphors (e.g. 'a country that has got two faces') and nominalisation and other instances of grammatical metaphor (e.g. 'co-ordination') are indicators of stronger SD, as are expressions with indefinite reference (e.g. 'these things') or those that imply a translocal scale (e.g. 'national government'). By contrast, expressions with definite reference (e.g. 'minibus taxis'), references to specific places (e.g. 'Emdeni') or people (e.g. 'my son') and concrete objects (e.g. 'wheelbarrows') are analysed as indicators of stronger SG.

Plotting and analysing semantic profiles allows us to examine the epistemological power with which MPs make their claims. Maton (2013) analyses the semantic profiles of teachers' classroom discourse to understand whether and how they allow students access to epistemologically powerful knowledge, and an analysis of the semantic profiles of MPs' speech allows us similarly to observe how effectively they use epistemological power to bring across their concerns, while negotiating the unequal relations of social power that exist in parliamentary committees. We demonstrate this in the following section.

Resemiotisation as rescaling in MPs' stories from their constituencies
In this section we compare two instances from the same meeting in which an MP refers to his/her constituency in raising a concern, to reveal what factors enable an MP's resemiotisation of a concern from their constituency to be carried through the genre chain of the committee process so that action can be taken on it. The meeting in question is a question-and-answer session in which representatives from the Department of Transport answered questions from members of the Portfolio Committee on Transport about their strategic plan and budget, which had been presented at a prior meeting. This meeting represents a further chance for MPs to ask questions of the department representatives and give them recommendations which would be included in the committee's report on the department's strategic plan and budget, to be compiled by the committee secretary.

There are four groups of participants involved in this meeting, as with most parliamentary committee meetings. These are:
- MPs: five MPs from the ruling African National Congress (ANC), including the chairperson; and four from opposition parties: two from the Democratic Alliance (DA) and one each from the Congress of the People (COPE) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) respectively.
- Presenters: five representatives of the Department of Transport, who are present to answer questions from the MPs following their presentation at a previous meeting.
- Parliamentary staff: the committee secretary, and a committee researcher employed to provide relevant information to all members of the committee, regardless of party affiliation.

- Public observers: members of the public including journalists, observers from civil society organisations and the first author, who are allowed to observe the committee's proceedings.

Figure 5 shows how these participants were seated in the room in which this meeting took place, which is situated in the Marks Building in the parliamentary precinct. This building houses the offices of most of parliament's opposition MPs, but also includes a few boardrooms used for committee meetings.

The two concerns we compare here are raised by an MP from the official opposition, the DA, whom we have labelled D1 for the purposes of this analysis; and the chairperson of the committee, whom we have labelled C. We have chosen to label C according to her function in the committee rather than her party affiliation as an ANC member. This serves as a reminder that she is the most powerful participant in the meeting, allocating speaking rights according to the internal procedures followed by the committee. Another two participants play a less important role in the interaction we report on here: A1, a committee member from the ANC; and R, the committee researcher, who is a parliamentary staff member, as described above.

In the next part, we report on our analysis of a discussion in which D1 tells a story from his personal experience about the need for better provision of transport, which C responds to. In what follows, we report on a story that C tells from her constituency about the need for better rural transport. Thereafter, we discuss how these two stories are resemiotised into the committee's report, and conclude that D1's story was resemiotised in far less detail than C's story. The chief casualty of this process of resemiotisation is that the details of D1's concern regarding the need for better urban transport provision are omitted from the report. Finally, we present and interpret committee secretaries' perspectives on why this happened. We foreground LCT and SFL as analytic tools in identifying the points of inflection at which levels of SD and SG fluctuate in our discussion. IS is more clearly foregrounded in the last part. The analysis also builds on the perspective afforded us through combining linguistic and critical ethnography with insights from the literature on resemiotisation and rescaling, as explained in the previous sections. This analysis demonstrates various factors which influence the effectiveness of MPs' resemiotisations of concerns from their constituencies in parliament.
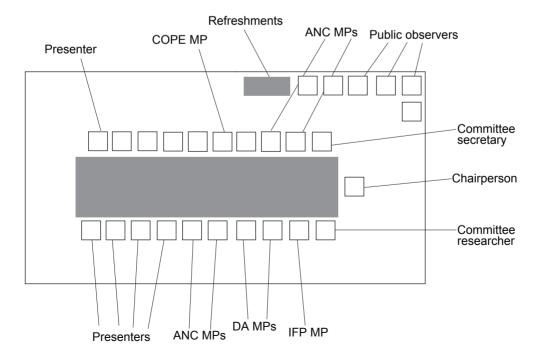

Figure 5: Layout of committee room

D1 and C's discussion on co-ordination

D1's concern is raised as part of a round of questions from a number of MPs to the presenters from the Department of Transport. This particular round of questions is long and complex, involving many MPs and threads of discussion, but at one point in it R is called on by C to ask two questions on behalf of the MPs. These two questions concerned planning for the provision of transport services for the rural poor, and the relations between the Department of Transport and a variety of other government departments. Following this, C elaborates on his question about transport for the rural poor. This question is followed by a brief question by A1 about progress in implementing the National Land Transport Act, which aims to facilitate co-ordination between various spheres and departments of government around transport strategies. Before C allows D1 to ask his question, she asks him if it relates to the themes that she and A have raised, saying that if it does not, she will let it wait for a later round of questions. This discussion preceding D1's question remains at a fairly strong degree of SD (Maton, 2014) through its reference to strategy and legislation.

A full transcript of D1's utterance appears below.[2]

> D1: YES madam chair um er- uh- (0.11) I feel QUITE (0.05) just as STRONGly as what the member was talking about in this (respect) (0.7) there are TWO parts (attached) the department's had a dilemma with (0.33) (to me) the FIRST is that many of the things have been spoken about (0.43) are not COMpetencies of the department but the place of provincial and local government (0.21) so my QUEStion is (1.35) IS there any co-ordination if at all (0.49) in WHAT is being done there has- there has to have some kind of formal co-ordination (0.97) UM- (0.55) FOR these things to happen or these issues to (come out) (0.06) that's- that's the FIRST aspect (0.05) if THAT would be unpacked discussed with us (0.12) I suspect perhaps that there ISN'T that co-ordination perhaps there's a challenge (0.59) but I MIGHT be wrong (0.39) I HOPE I am (0.35) the second is although a LOT of people have been uh- (0.41) QUITE rightly saying that these issues exist in the rural areas (0.71) I must point out that these THINGS happen equally (0.96) in the- in the urban areas as WELL (0.48) I'll give you an example (clears throat) my son stays in (EmDEni) with his mother (0.45) and that's on the Other side of Soweto (0.54) it takes him two hours to get to school every morning gotta wake up at half past- he's gotta LEAVE the house at half past five every morning (0.67) by the time he's at- he's at school he exhausted i- you know it's a tiring exercise just to GET to school (0.49) not even talking going back home after a long day maybe having played SPORT (0.84) he's TIRED all that kind of thing only do his homework from seven eight o'clock that evening (0.73) so it HAS all these social impacts (0.26) (clears throat) this this UM (0.69) aPARTheid style planning that still exists unfortunately (0.89) has these SOcial impacts and economic as well (0.27) it COSTS money um (0.21) to TRANSport people around and so forth (0.52) now the PROblem is and I'll give you the example that I can relate to in EmDEni there is no (0.51) train station not even remotely near there's no nothing there's ONLY (0.28) uh- uh- uh MInibus taxis (0.75) which in its OWN are dangerous and all the other issues that go with it (0.8) so I- I just say there should be stronger co-ordiNAtion (0.65) that would almost force or START or- or- (0.5) PUSH-start (0.62) LOcal governments and- and uh- provincial governments to get these developments going to get (0.5) things HAPpening that people can move around a lot easier (0.6) um- you know I won't go ON but I think you get the gist thank you

D1's resemiotisation of his son's transport difficulties in Soweto is preceded and followed by semantically denser comments on the topic of 'co-ordination'. We focus on his resemiotisation of his son's experiences before examining how it relates to these contextualising comments. We show that D1 resemiotises these experiences not only to represent his constituency well, but also to identify with the black working class and to attempt to gain political capital with the other MPs in the committee, particularly those with roots in the black working class.

D1's resemiotisation of his son's difficulties is remarkable largely in the way he attempts to exploit it for political gain through the way it enters into dialogue with his fellow MPs' schemata (Widdowson 1983), particularly those belonging to the ruling ANC. D1 is a white, English first-language speaker in 2009, so his interlocutors would expect his family to live in a historically white, middle-class urban

area, but instead he mentions that his family lives in an area named Emdeni, which is on 'the other side of Soweto', the well-known poor, historically black township which falls in D1's constituency of Johannesburg South. These spatial references thus constitute a group of contextualisation cues according to IS terminology (Gumperz 1982) indexing that D1, despite his race and affiliation to an opposition party associated with the middle class, identifies with the black working class and so can claim to represent them. 'The other side of Soweto' refers to the area of Soweto at the farthest distance from the boy's school, thus ensuring a long travel time. Interestingly, a black ANC MP present in the meeting, whom we refer to as A2, said that she thought that D1 was saying that his son lived in a rural farming area on the far side of Soweto from the city centre. This interpretation could be a product of two factors: D1's utterance is embedded in a discussion that had focused on rural areas, and her reasoning may be that because D1 is white, his son could not possibly stay in a historically black residential area in urban Soweto itself, and so D1 must be referring to a rural area outside of Soweto. In any case, A2's interpretation means that she clearly does not see D1's story about his son as illustrating a contention that transport needs improving in urban areas as well as rural areas.

D1 uses his story to index situational co-membership (Erickson 1996) with the black working class, and particularly with the committee members who have a black working-class background. He refers to 'minibus taxis', a standard working-class mode of transport in South Africa. Through referring to 'apartheid-style planning' he claims that his son, like many of his interlocutors, is a victim of apartheid's legacy, even though D1 himself is a member of the race usually described as the beneficiaries of apartheid. Thus D1's resemiotisation of his son's spatial background appears to be an attempt to increase his social power (Fairclough 2003) with the black members of the committee.

D1's contextualising comments at the beginning of his utterance structure it into two points: 'there are two parts (attached) the department's had a dilemma with'. His discussion of each of these points begins at a relatively strong level of SD (Maton 2014). The transcript of the first point is reproduced below for convenience:

> the FIRST is that many of the things have been spoken about (0.43) are not COMpetencies of the department but the place of provincial and local government (0.21) so my QUEStion is (1.35) IS there any co-ordination if at all (0.49) in WHAT is being done there has- there has to have some kind of formal co-ordination (0.97) UM- (0.55) FOR these things to happen or these issues to (come out) (0.06) that's- that's the FIRST aspect (0.05) if THAT would be unpacked discussed with us (0.12) I suspect perhaps that there ISN'T that co-ordination perhaps there's a challenge (0.59) but I MIGHT be wrong (0.39) I HOPE I am

The relatively strong level of SD is marked at the beginning of this extract by the indefinite reference 'many of the things have been spoken about', and the nominalisation 'competencies', which is derived from the adjective 'competent' (Martin 1993). The definite reference to 'provincial and local government' indicates a slight strengthening in SG, but is still on an abstract, national scale, referring to all provincial and local governments in the country. Three mentions of the nominalisation 'co-ordination' (which comes from the Process/verb 'to co-ordinate') and indefinite references to objects such as 'these things' indicate that the discourse remains at a very strong level of SD; in fact D1 invites the presenters to strengthen the SG of the discourse on this matter of 'co-ordination' by asking 'if that would be unpacked', that is, if the policies intended to ensure co-ordination between different spheres of government could be explained in more concrete detail so that the committee could critique them.

Under the second point, D1 rescales his discourse to a strong level of SG through his reference to his son's hardships in Emdeni, but then returns abruptly to a strong level of SD before repeating this pattern. He says:

> the second is although a LOT of people have been uh- (0.41) QUITE rightly saying that these issues exist in the rural areas (0.71) I must point out that these THINGS happen equally (0.96) in the- in the urban areas as WELL (0.48) I'll give you an example (clears throat) my son stays in (EmDEni) with his mother (0.45) and that's on the Other side of Soweto (0.54) it takes him two hours to get to school every morning gotta wake up at half past- he's gotta LEAVE the house at half past five every morning (0.67) by the time he's at- he's at school he exhausted i- you know it's a tiring exercise just to GET to school (0.49) not even talking going back home after a long day maybe having played SPORT (0.84) he's TIRED all that kind of thing only do

his homework from seven eight o'clock that evening (0.73) so it HAS all these social impacts (0.26) (clears throat) this this UM (0.69) aPARTheid style planning that still exists unfortunately (0.89) has these SOcial impacts and economic as well (0.27) it COSTS money um (0.21) to TRANSport people around and so forth (0.52) now the PROblem is and I'll give you the example that I can relate to in EmDEni there is no (0.51) train station not even remotely near there's no nothing there's ONLY (0.28) uh- uh- uh MInibus taxis (0.75) which in its OWN are dangerous and all the other issues that go with it (0.8) so I- I just say there should be stronger co-ordiNAtion (0.65) that would almost force or START or- or- (0.5) PUSH-start (0.62) LOcal governments and- and uh- provincial governments to get these developments going to get (0.5) things HAPpening that people can move around a lot easier (0.6) um- you know I won't go ON but I think you get the gist thank you

That D1 again begins this point at a stronger level of SD is evident from his indefinite reference to 'these issues' and 'these things' as well as his general reference to 'rural areas' and 'urban areas'. His offer, 'I'll give you an example', projects (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) a rescaling from his generalisation about urban areas and rural areas to the specific reference to his son in Emdeni, which, because it is a concrete example of one person's troubles with accessing transport services, has a strong level of SG. Thereafter, he uses the conjunction 'so' to indicate a strengthening in SD, in which the son's hardships are recontextualised as general 'social impacts'. Next, he repeats this pattern: he uses the word 'example' followed by a projected clause referring to 'EmDEni' to strengthen the SG and then uses the conjunction 'so' to introduce a conclusion at a stronger level of SD, where the nominalisation 'co-ordination' is introduced: 'so I- I just say there should be stronger co-ordination'. This is followed by another reference to 'local governments and- and uh- provincial governments' on a national scale, and more indefinite references to 'these developments' and 'things'. Thus one can plot a semantic profile of D1's utterance as shown in Figure 6, labelling the various points of inflection. This profile serves as a rough aid to understanding the structure of D1's comments and reflects a qualitative assessment of comparative levels of SD and SG in the analysis, rather than some quantitative measure of these variables.

What remains is to examine the effectiveness of these comments by considering the ways in which these comments were recontextualised by other participants in the meeting and resemiotised in the committee's report.

In our ethnographic interviews with them, both D1 (as the speaker) and A2 (as one of his hearers) initially viewed this utterance as having just one overarching 'point', namely that there needed to be more co-ordination of different spheres of government in ensuring transport provision. We had to cue D1 to viewing the utterance as consisting of two points before he was able to summarise each of these points in one Clause Complex each. He summarised the first point as 'some kind of formal co-ordination between the spheres of government' and the second as 'the lack of public transport'.
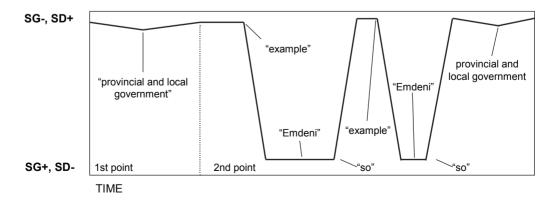

Figure 6: A semantic profile of D1's utterance on co-ordination between spheres of government

Thus for him at the time of the interview, the notion that further public transport provision is necessary was more salient than the idea that this provision was required in urban areas just as much as it was in rural areas.

This means that there is a dissonance between our perspective of the utterance as analysts and D1's perceptions of it: while we analysed the utterance into two separate points, he viewed it more easily as a whole. According to his schemata (Widdowson 1983) as a member of the committee, then, there is a closer link between providing urban public transport (at a stronger level of SG) and co-ordination between spheres of government on provision of public transport (at a stronger level of SD) than we had initially perceived. Nevertheless, the structure of D1's utterance does not make this link explicit, which weakens the epistemological power (Maton and Moore 2010) of his utterance.

C comments at length on D1's concern after his utterance:

C: ((*coughs*)) (2.06) eh- HOnourable (D1) you are raising a question of uh- (0.41) you are saying that the Issues raised also relate to the role of the provincial and local govern-ment (1.02) (and we HAven't heard) (1.64) for the integrated UM- (1.98) DEvelopment framework (0.39) AT (0.33) which UM- (0.32) which reQUIRES (1.08) that WHEN (0.35) dePARTments plan (1.43) they (PLAN) together and the co-ordination happens at the district (0.45) municipality level which MEANS (1.44) the IDP process (1.64) reQUIRES (0.73) ALL departments (0.41) that would BE (1.03) HAving projects (0.53) withIN that district (1.07) starting at national provincial and local level to BE (0.51) part of that PROcess meaning that (0.99) the NAtional departments will be sharing their (0.37) strategic PLANS (0.53) in reLAtion to (1.23) DEvelopment that is going to be taking place at uh- at uh- that district (0.84) the SAME would happen with the provincial departments (0.35) AND (0.83) the LOcal municipality (1.02) THAT has not happened (2.67) that has not happened the CO-ORdination role of a district municipality (1.33) is ONE not taken seriously (0.67) the integrated development uh- FRAMEwork at (1.12) is as IF (0.78) it's THERE but uh- it- it [doesn't] force us=

O: [<( )>]   =<(   )>

C: to PLAN (0.69) toGEther (0.71) whi- there it doesn't force US (1.02) to implement together HENCE the duplication and also (0.39) the MISmatch (0.56) of UH- (0.48) the IMplementation of the programme (0.38) you SEE a school (0.8) where there is a plan for a ROAD (0.52) but the ROAD's ( ) (0.39) will BE (0.75) BUILT (0.54) FIVE years after the school has been delivered (0.66) there will be a SCHOOL (1.25) AND uh there- there will be a plan (0.39) for WAter and sanitation (0.53) BUT (1.15) The IMplementation of that water and sanitation would take (0.44) FIVE years (0.71) MEAning then that eh- (0.86) ((*clears throat*)) (0.21) to the PERson who is receiving these services (1.08) the school is THERE but I'm not happy (0.72) to be in the SCHOOL (0.45) because I don't have the toilets and I don't have WAter (0.93) SO (0.74) ((*coughs*)) (1.69) the Freedom Charter aspect there will be COMfort (0.67) and seCUrity (1.05) is NOT met (0.97) the SERvice has been delivered there has been PLANning but there is no co-ordination (0.23) IN the implementation process (0.45) THEREfore you don't reach (1.42) the FREEdom Charter (0.27) COMfort and security (5.05) the SCHOOL is there (0.41) the DOORS of learning have been opened but (0.35) they are NOT (meet) (0.62) to COMfort (0.6) and security aspect of the Freedom Charter (0.99) therefore the quality of life of the PERson (0.79) doesn't CHANGE (0.9) MOney is spent (0.57) but the PERson who is receiving (0.47) doesn't FEEL (1.04) the VAlue (1.39) THAT is what we are saying here (0.6) to say at CLUster level as well as (1.45) the vertical and eh- horizontal WHERE do we meet each other as a department (1.45) SO that (0.52) when a SCHOOL is being delivered (0.69) the Electricity yo- to the school is also delivered (0.35) the ROAD to school is also delivered (0.26) the water and sanitation to the school is delivered so that when the school is handed over it is a comPLETE (0.46) LEARning centre (5.57) AND

O: [((*sneezes*))]

C: [what] we're asking from the department is TELL us (0.89) WHAT we should do (0.93) to ensure to facilitate that WHAT are the bottlenecks (0.52) from YOUR side (0.58)

> SO that (0.52) there can be then (NObody) (9.43) can NOW (0.29) we can NOW hand over to the department to respond to

C recontextualises D1's reference to 'provincial and local government' verbatim, but does not remark on his second point that public transport in urban areas as well as rural areas needs attention. In fact, discussion of improving transport in urban areas is noticeably absent from the rest of the meeting and the report produced from it, as the remainder of this article shows. Yet in interviews we found that D1, A2 and A3 all agree that here C is not disagreeing with D1 in any way, but is simply building on what he said.

If one analyses the semantic profile of C's utterance, one finds that she begins on the same relatively strong level of SD that D1 ends on, as shown in her recontextualisation of 'provincial and local government'. Then she immediately shifts to an even stronger level of SD by discussing 'the integrated UM- (1.98) DEvelopment framework' that is supposed to dictate the process by which these spheres of government co-ordinate with each other. The Mental Process 'reQUIRES' projects the clause, 'that WHEN 0.35) dePARTments plan' (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014), which acts as a scene-setter for a discussion of how this co-ordination should take place at local and provincial government level according to the Integrated Development Framework, strengthening the level of SG to a degree. However, the discussion continues to revolve around spheres of government rather than concrete transport programmes: 'at the district (0.45) municipality level', and then later 'national provincial and local level'. Eventually she reaches a conclusion at a stronger level of SD, which is a meta-comment (Tannen 1984) on this process of planning: 'the CO-ORdination role of a district municipality (1.33) is ONE not taken seriously'. This is then related back to a conclusion about 'the integrated development uh- FRAMEwork': it 'is as IF (0.78) it's THERE but uh- it- it doesn't force us to PLAN (0.69) toGEther'.

In the following section of the utterance, she gives an example to illustrate a grammatical metaphor (Martin 1993), 'the MISmatch (0.56) of UH- (0.48) the IMplementation of the programme'. Here the Process in which government departments implemented a programme poorly such that different services were provided at different times is rephrased as a nominal expression, a 'mismatch'. C's illustration of this grammatical metaphor takes her utterance to its strongest level of SG, extending down to the level of the specific 'PERson who is receiving these services' and the 'toilets' and 'water' there, but it is still a hypothetical example rather than one rooted in a particular geographic context as D1's example from Emdeni was.

C then rescales sharply up to discuss 'the FREEdom Charter', a text written in 1955 and highly valued by the ANC, which set the agenda for its conception of a national democratic revolution and prescribed certain demands for democratic social reforms (Hudson 1986). One of these is that 'There shall be houses, security and comfort!' (The Congress of the People 1955). This is what C is resemiotising when she says 'there will be COMfort (0.67) and seCUrity'. Since the Freedom Charter is one of the texts used by the ANC to determine its policy agenda, one can say that here C is bringing the discussion to a stronger level of SD than has yet been reached in this discussion, one where terms such as 'comfort' and 'security' condense not only positive feelings but also entire policy directions taken by the national government. She briefly rescales to a stronger level of SG to mention the cause of this situation in which the standards of the Freedom Charter are not met: 'the SERvice has been delivered there has been PLANning but there is no co-ordination (0.23) IN the implementation process'. Then she uses the conjunction 'THEREfore' to return to her conclusion about the Freedom Charter.

What follows is more rapid alternation between the strong SG of C's hypothetical example and the strong SD of the Freedom Charter. She cites the example again, saying 'the SCHOOL is there', and then immediately relates this to another provision of the Freedom Charter, 'the DOORS of learning have been opened'. However, the provision she mentioned earlier has still not been fulfilled: 'they are NOT (meet) (0.62) to COMfort (0.6) and security aspect of the Freedom Charter'. This results in a conclusion about one of the people in her example: 'therefore the quality of life of the PERson (0.79) doesn't CHANGE'. This conclusion is rescaled at a stronger level of SG when she says 'MOney is spent (0.57) but the PERson who is receiving (0.47) doesn't FEEL (1.04) the VAlue'. She then summarises her point at a stronger level of SD, introduced by 'THAT is what we are saying here', where she returns to the lexis of intergovernmental co-ordination using spatial metaphors: 'CLUster level', 'the vertical' and 'the horizontal'. The results of this co-ordination, introduced by 'SO that', must be reflected at the

strong level of SG of her example, 'when a SCHOOL is being delivered'. Finally, she sums up the entire discussion, including D1's utterance and her own, in a request to the Department of Transport, dictating what action she expects them to take as a result of this discussion:

> what we're asking from the department is TELL us (0.89) WHAT we should do (0.93) to ensure to facilitate that WHAT are the bottlenecks (0.52) from YOUR side (0.58) SO that (0.52) there can be then (NObody) (9.43) can NOW (0.29) we can NOW hand over to the department to respond to

This final request is scaled at an intermediate level of SD: while it includes the metaphor of 'bottlenecks' and speaks of 'the department' as an abstract entity, it also gives the department something definite to do: 'TELL us (0.89) WHAT we should do'.

At this stage it is useful to examine the semantic profile of both D1 and C's utterances, taken together. This is plotted on Figure 7.

D1 refers to his example twice, and then moves directly up to a strong level of SD and stays there until the end of his utterance. At this strong level of SD, he does not refer back to his example in any way but instead recontextualises his comments at the beginning of the utterance on provincial and local government. This serves to strengthen the cohesion of his utterance, such that he and his listeners perceive him as making one point in his utterance, rather than two points. However, it also means that his example is not linked explicitly with this point, resulting in there being a degree of discord between the example (which is about urban public transport provision) and his main point (which is about the need for greater co-ordination between spheres of government to ensure public transport provision). This lack of cohesion between his example and his main point is illustrated in Figure 7 by representing D1's rescaling up and down the semantic scale using dashed lines rather than solid lines. This reveals that D1 in fact oscillates between what Maton (2013) would term a high semantic flatline and a low semantic flatline. The evidence he gives in his example does not match the point he is trying to make, rendering this point epistemologically weak and difficult to integrate coherently into the committee's report.

By contrast, C rescales often between her example and reference to the Freedom Charter and the need for greater co-ordination, ensuring that her example is continuously borne in mind as she makes her final call to the department to tell the committee where obstacles to co-ordination between spheres of government exist. This rescaling is done in such a way that she manages to integrate experience at three distinct levels of SD: the level of the school in her example, the level of co-operation between spheres of government and the level of the Freedom Charter. Thus C has a much wider semantic range than D1 (there is a longer distance between the highest and lowest points of her semantic profile than that of D1), but her contribution also matches the optimal semantic wave found in Figure 3 more closely
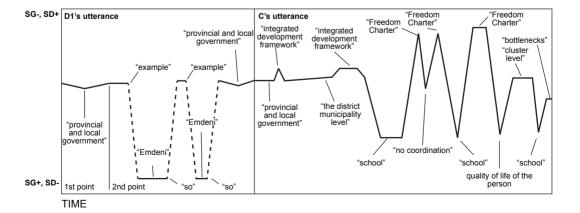

Figure 7: A semantic profile of D1 and C's discussion on co-ordination between spheres of government

than D1's does, clearly linking the material she is speaking about at the different levels on the semantic scale (Maton 2013). This integration produces a more powerful knowledge claim than that of D1.

It appears that C elaborates on D1's main point that better co-ordination between spheres of government is needed. However, while D1's utterance and his example of his son in Emdeni have a particular focus on co-ordination to ensure provision of transport services, C's example of the school refers more to co-ordination between different government departments to ensure that different types of service are provided in an integrated way. The effect of the difference between D1 and C's examples is that there is no single expression of the discussion at a stronger level of SG; instead, those listening to them are forced to abstract away from both of these examples to the aspect that they have in common, namely that they illustrate that more co-ordination between spheres and departments of government is needed to ensure effective service delivery. Thus interpreters are forced to reduce information radically in order to draw a single conclusion from this discussion. It is D1's example that suffers the most from this process of reduction, since it is a real-life example of a particular problem from D1's constituency that needs to be addressed, unlike C's example which is hypothetical. As a result, D1's concern about provision of public transport in urban areas is not recontextualised further in the meeting's discourse, and it is not reflected in the committee's official report on the Department of Transport's budget and strategic plan, as we show later in this discussion. Instead, the part of his contribution that is recontextualised is his reference to the provincial and local governments as necessary participants in the 'co-ordination' required in transport planning.

This shows that D1 does not resemiotise his concern in an epistemologically powerful form which would have allowed it to be remembered and resemiotised into the committee's report more accurately. The following section shows how C is able to resemiotise a concern from her constituency in an epistemologically powerful manner, which ensures that the concern she expresses is resemiotised into the committee report in a more accurate way than D1's one is.

C's utterance on rural transport
C, like D1, resemiotises an example from her geographical background in this meeting. This takes place about five minutes after the end of D1's utterance. She interrupts a presenter from the Department of Transport, who had just mentioned plans to modify the country's new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) services to accommodate disabled people. A transcript of her turn at speaking appears below:

    C: ...can you STOP there
    O: ((*coughs*))
    C: MY understanding of the BRT is that it is happening in big cities (1.55) it is LINKED to
        2010 for now
        (0.23)
    A1: <mmm>
        (3.62)
    C: can WE really be driven by an event (1.84) TO- to- to- t- to- to address issues of develop-
        ment (0.88) MNA (*I*) I was born in Harding (2.11) and there ARE people in Harding that
        have been travelling on wheelbarrows because there are (0.77) THEY have um- (0.48)
        they are physiCALly (0.97) CHALlenged (2.13) THE people in Harding that have been
        (0.6) TRAvelling (1.26) IN uh- (1.02) IN (the) (0.63) sledge
        (0.12)
    A1: <SLEDGE mmm>
        (0.14)
    C: SLEDGE (0.92) to COLlect i-pension
        (0.59)
    A1: <mmm (1.18) mmm (1.09) mmm>
        (0.1)
    C: because there is NO (0.27) ONE (1.68) Adequate (0.56) ROAD infrastructure (0.19)
    A1: <mmm>
        (0.66)

C: but Also (0.43) there is NO mode of transport adequate mode of transport that accommo-
     dates them (1.83) NOW (1.93) when we TALK BRT we talk BRT as if we are talking (1.43)
     something that is going to address the problem that we are talking about in the rural areas
     we MUST understand that e- we are living in a country that has got two faces (0.89)
     MAYbe when we hear the the- the- the- the- the terminology second economy (0.83)
     we LOSE (0.22) what we ACtually mean (0.73) we have a THIRD and a first-world country
     in South Africa (2.59) AND (0.27) the maJOrity of the people are living in the third-world
     part of South Africa (2.66) SO let us talk about interventions that are upgrading (0.5) and
     improving the quality of LIFE (0.62) of the THIRD world (0.78) PART of the community
     (0.31) withIN South Africa (0.38) because the first-world PART (0.37) has had it ALL right
     all these years (1.82) so that is NOT our pri- we are not saying we are going to neglect
     them (0.77) but we are SAYing (0.68) there are people that have BEEN (1.47) treated
     as less citizens of this country for THREE hundred and sixty-five years (0.69) beFORE
     (0.73) THIS government came into power (0.51) so the priOrities of this government (0.85)
     should NOT be skewed (1.16) to first address and imPROVE (1.53) the- the- the services
     that already exist and neGLECT (1.76) areas WHERE (0.7) there are NO services (0.67)
     WHEN we see a person that goes to collect pension on a wheelbarrow (2.0) the SItuation
     be changed (1.98) WHEN shall we see (0.53) a TRANS- a form of transport that covers
     because (0.46) ALso we must bear in mind that e- most of those people (0.23) are in the
     rural areas beCAUSE (0.99) the HEALTH fo- facilities (0.43) they're NOT provided so we
     have many people (0.92) who could NOT be immunised (1.08) for THEM not to have polio
     (1.36) so it is NOT (0.48) THEIR desire that they find them (0.29) in THOSE situations
     (0.74) it's beCAUSE o- of how apartheid was structured (0.56) AND (1.03) HOW apartheid
     (0.76) exCLUded them (0.38) and dePRIved them of the services (0.82) SO (0.35) TALK
     to us (0.63) aBOUT (0.31) let's SEE the target group IN- the target group of the BRT the
     re- (0.3) BRT the rural communities

As with D1's concern in the previous section, we first discuss the way in which C resemiotises her
geographical background here before considering how she rescales it (Collins et al. 2009) to apply to
a national level. She introduces this resemiotisation by code-switching, using the word 'MNA', which
means 'me' in isiXhosa. This word suggests that C is about to rescale her utterance by introducing
her personal experience into the discussion. Furthermore, Harding, the place she refers to, is a small
rural town in the southern part of South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province. While isiZulu is the majority
language in KwaZulu-Natal, there is a dialect continuum between it and the closely-related isiXhosa,
dominant in the Eastern Cape. Thus, the isiXhosa word 'mna' highlights Harding's position at the
margins of KwaZulu-Natal, the zone of contact between isiZulu and isiXhosa. Thus C's use of an
isiXhosa code-switch evokes the particular sociolinguistic fabric of this area and identifies her with its
poor, rural, marginalised inhabitants.

This effect is further pronounced by the use of a further code-switch in the word 'i-pension', where
C affixes 'i-', a singular noun class prefix in both isiZulu and isiXhosa, to the word 'pension'. This
comes just after a repetition of the word 'sledge' by C and A1, which, it is evident from the recording,
functions as a confirmation that 'sledge' is the English word for the object C wishes to refer to. Thus
even this repetition of the word 'sledge' would serve to index C's co-membership with the poor, rural
people of Harding. In an ethnographic interview, A3 agreed that C was using this story to represent
her constituency in parliament. In this way C, like D1, uses resemiotisation of her experience to identify
with the people she is seeking to represent.

Where C appears to differ from D1 is in the way in which she contextualises her reference to
personal experience for the committee. She refers to 'big cities', indicating that her discourse is at
that stage on a trans-local, probably national, scale. However, her reference to a specific transport
project, 'BRT', and '2010' (referring to the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup hosted by South Africa), mark
this part of the utterance as being at a moderate level of SG. She then rescales this to a weaker level
of SG by rewording '2010' as 'an event' and making a nominalised, indefinite reference to 'issues of
development'.

In an interview, D1 said that he disagreed with C's implication that the BRT project was 'driven by an event', the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Another DA MP on the committee, D2, said that the project was essential because it was needed to transport hundreds of people in the urban areas. Both of them expressed the opinion that C did not fully understand the motivation for the BRT project or its significance at the time of the meeting. This highlights that C's remarks about the BRT project were by no means accepted by all members of the committee.

C begins to draw conclusions out of her reference to Harding by using the conjunction 'because' to introduce two reasons why pensioners in Harding travel in wheelbarrows and sledges: 'there is NO (0.27) ONE (1.68) Adequate (0.56) ROAD infrastructure' and 'there is NO mode of transport adequate mode of transport that accommodates them'. These are followed by a stressed 'NOW' which indexes that C is stepping outside the local scale of Harding to return to the national scale of her previous comments. Her following comments are on the same level of SD as those opening comments, as shown by the repetition of 'BRT' and the rescaling from the problems of Harding to the problems of 'rural areas'.

However, C quickly shifts to a stronger level of SD by invoking a lexical metaphor of South Africa as 'a country that has got two faces':

> we MUST understand that e- we are living in a country that has got two faces (0.89) MAYbe when we hear the the- the- the- the- the- the terminology second economy (0.83) we LOSE (0.22) what we ACtually mean (0.73) we have a THIRD and a first-world country in South Africa (2.59) AND (0.27) the maJOrity of the people are living in the third-world part of South Africa (2.66) SO let us talk about interventions that are upgrading (0.5) and improving the quality of LIFE (0.62) of the THIRD world (0.78) PART of the community (0.31) withIN South Africa (0.38) because the first-world PART (0.37) has had it ALL right all these years

C's reference to 'a country that has got two faces' may well be a recontextualisation of a speech made in parliament's National Assembly by Thabo Mbeki in 1998 when he was South Africa's deputy president[3], in which he said,

> *A major component part of the issue of reconciliation and nation building is defined by and derives from the material conditions in our society which have divided our country into two nations, the one black and the other white.* (Mbeki 1998)

In this section, C, following Mbeki, does not simply refer spatially to South Africa as one country, but metaphorically as two countries: 'we have a THIRD and a first-world country in South Africa'. In other words, metaphorically at least, C's talk moves past the national scale to the international scale for a brief moment. This is accompanied by the use of a two nominalisations: 'interventions' (from the Process 'to intervene') and 'life' (from the Process 'to live'). Because nominalisations are a type of grammatical metaphor, as explained earlier, one can see that here there are two types of metaphor at work, lexical metaphor (as in 'we have a THIRD and a first-world country in South Africa') and grammatical metaphor, both of which seek to condense meaning into a few words, strengthening the SD of this part of the utterance (Martin 1993; Gerot and Wignell 1994). C has clearly rescaled her example from Harding to a strong level of SD, making it relevant at a national scale by showing how the conditions in Harding are symptomatic of the 'THIRD world (0.78) PART of the community', which remains very underdeveloped.

Next, C draws out the implications for government of these abstract points, in a section of her utterance introduced by the conjunction, 'so':

> so that is NOT our pri- we are not saying we are going to neglect them (0.77) but we are SAYing (0.68) there are people that have BEEN (1.47) treated as less citizens of this country for THREE hundred and sixty-five years (0.69) beFORE (0.73) THIS government came into power (0.51) so the priOrities of this government (0.85) should NOT be skewed (1.16) to first address and imPROVE (1.53) the- the- the services that already exist and neGLECT (1.76) areas WHERE (0.7) there are NO services

Although C is suggesting a way in which the government should apply what she has just said, her talk remains at a fairly strong level of SD, thanks to indefinite references to 'we' (presumably the government, including parliament), repetition of the nominalisation 'services' (from the Process 'to

serve'), and the fact that this application is projected as a Verbal Process (something that 'we' say) rather than a Material Process (something that 'we' do; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014).

C's repeated (and often stressed) denials using the words 'NOT' and 'NO' in this section assumes a previous discourse (Fairclough 2001) which has raised the concern that 'them' (the first-world part of the country) are being neglected due to attention being shifted to the previously-disadvantaged community. In South African politics in 2009, when this meeting took place, this discourse would most commonly be associated with the DA, because it was perceived by supporters of many other parties to represent largely people from the white middle class which forms 'the first-world part' of the country.

Following this argument that service delivery in the rural areas needs to be prioritised, C uses the conjunction 'WHEN' to anchor her discourse in time and return to her example from Harding, not through mention of the name, but the physical object used to carry people in this rural area:

> WHEN we see a person that goes to collect pension on a wheelbarrow (2.0) the SItuation be changed (1.98) WHEN shall we see (0.53) a TRANS- a form of transport that covers because (0.46) ALso we must bear in mind that e- most of those people (0.23) are in the rural areas beCAUSE (0.99) the HEALTH fo- facilities (0.43) they're NOT provided so we have many people (0.92) who could NOT be immunised (1.08) for THEM not to have polio (1.36) so it is NOT (0.48) THEIR desire that they find them (0.29) in THOSE situations (0.74) it's beCAUSE o- of how apartheid was structured (0.56) AND (1.03) HOW apartheid (0.76) exCLUded them (0.38) and dePRIved them of the services (0.82) SO (0.35) TALK to us (0.63) aBOUT (0.31) let's SEE the target group IN- the target group of the BRT the re- (0.3) BRT the rural communities

The people featuring in C's example are repeatedly referred to as 'those people' or 'them' throughout this last part of her utterance. As in her previous utterance discussed above, she alternates rapidly between a strong level of SD and a strong level of SG in relating her example of 'those people' to abstract socio-political conditions such as 'apartheid'. She uses the conjunction 'beCAUSE' to introduce an explanation at a stronger level of SD for why the people in her example are disabled: 'the HEALTH fo- facilities (0.43) they're NOT provided'. This is then linked back to consequences at the level of her example, where she explains that a lack of health facilities leads to people not being immunised for debilitating diseases such as polio. In explaining the causes for this further, she refers to 'apartheid', an exceptionally semantically dense term which condenses an entire political and social system and all of the attendant negative emotions that accompany it. Her frequent references to her example serve as reminders of this example, which enable her to rescale effectively to matters of national policy without losing any of the impact or specificity of her resemiotisation of her experience in Harding.

The final 'SO' introduces a challenge to the Department of Transport to tell the committee what their plans are to extend transport to the people in her example, who are now recontextualised as part of 'the target group', which is in turn reworded as 'the rural communities'. This again follows the same pattern as her earlier utterance in the discussion on 'co-ordination', by concluding her utterance with a challenge to the department. This last part of the utterance, 'let's SEE the target group IN- the target group of the BRT the re- (0.3) BRT the rural communities' does not seem to be very grammatical, but it brings across the point that programmes such as BRT are needed in rural areas.

It is evident from the above analysis that C exhibits a repeated wave pattern in her semantic profiles. A profile for this utterance is given in Figure 8, once again showing the most important points of inflection in the utterance.

In this utterance, C again rescales constantly between the level of her example and stronger levels of SD in order to relate her example to the more abstract matters being discussed in the meeting, namely improvement in transport services for disabled people. She in turn relates this to a direct instruction to the department prescribing how they should respond to her utterance. In so doing, she produces another semantic wave and is able to build a coherent and epistemologically powerful knowledge claim. This is despite the fact that the last part of her utterance does not seem particularly easy to interpret from a grammatical point of view. As is shown in the following section, C's strategy of making semantic waves is effective in ensuring that the concern from her constituency that she relays is resemiotised in the committee's report far more faithfully than D1's concern from his constituency is.
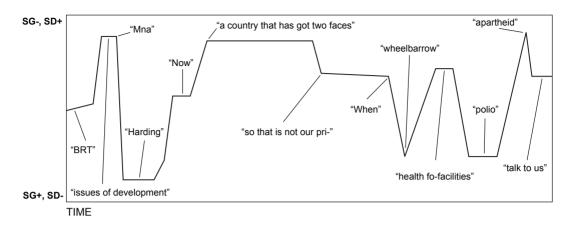
Figure 8: A semantic profile of C's utterance on rural transport

The written report

The committee's report is structured into sections describing the Department of Transport's strategic plan and budget, and other sections resemiotising the committee members' spoken questions and comments at the meeting in point form under three headings: 'Findings by the Committee', 'Resolutions' and 'Recommendations by the Committee to the Department'. Under each of these headings, different concerns raised by the committee members are represented as bullet points.

   The point in the committee's report which most closely resemiotises D1 and C's discussion on co-ordination reported on above is located under 'Findings by the Committee'. It reads as follows:

> *The master plan and integrated development planning occurs at the planning phase coordinated by the district municipalities but the committee observed that this function was not implemented to its maximum. The implementation of programmes do [sic] not accommodate integrated planning and integrated service delivery which is a concern.*

This paragraph sums up D1 and C's lengthy discussion in two clause complexes at an extremely strong level of SD. It follows the discourse conventions of the committee report genre by using the expression 'the committee observed that', both to indicate its support of what 'the committee' said, and attribute decisions made to the committee as a whole, rather than to any individual members. This allows the report to condense together the voices of several different committee members. While this paragraph addresses the chief concern raised in D1's utterance (the need for 'integrated planning' to address transport needs), it echoes the wording of C's recontextualisation and elaboration on D1's comments rather than the wording of D1's comments themselves. For instance, it is C, rather than D1, who introduced the concepts of 'the district municipalities' and 'integrated development planning'. However, C's example of the integrated planning that needs to go into building a school has also not been resemiotised into the report.

   The concern D1 reported through his resemiotisation of his son's experience in Emdeni, namely that people in urban areas are suffering from a lack of efficient public transportation, does not appear in the report in any form. This is shown by the fact that the only reference to 'urban' in the report is a resemiotisation of one of the presenters' utterances, in the clause complex 'The department has identified the significance of managing cost inflation since this affects its projects and it would further develop rural and urban standards.'

   Thus it appears that the committee secretary responsible for writing this report has abstracted away from both D1 and C's examples. This summary has also eliminated the subtle differences between D1's point that co-ordination is needed in providing transport services, and C's point that co-ordination is needed in ensuring that the full range of services are provided when, for instance, a school is built. In fact, the wording of the report paragraph does not mention 'transport', but 'integrated service delivery',

which more closely reflects C's concern that the whole range of services should be provided. Thus D1's concerns have not been directly resemiotised into the report, but instead C's recontextualisation and development of D1's concerns has been. This makes it appear as though C has acted as a mediator and gatekeeper of D1's comments in the committee, determining what aspects of his utterance appear in the report. C may have been seeking to 'redirect' D1's comments because D1 came from an opposition party whose views were at odds with those of the majority of the committee, or she may simply have used them as an occasion to state her own views on the topic under discussion.

Meanwhile, the paragraph in the report which most closely resemiotises C's concern appears under 'Recommendations by the Committee to the Department'. It is reproduced below (the gloss in square brackets is ours):

> *The Committee requested DOT [the Department of Transport] to develop a comprehensive plan in the rural areas for public transport since most people in the rural areas use taxis which are not subsidised by government and the challenge of un-roadworthy buses still remains. There is no adequate transportation for old people in the rural areas some still get their pension money using wheelbarrows and this was unacceptable.*

The first clause complex of this paragraph appears to resemiotise C's instruction to the department at the end of her utterance, 'TALK to us (0.63) aBOUT (0.31) let's SEE the target group IN- the target group of the BRT the re- (0.3) BRT the rural communities'. It once again attributes this instruction to the committee as a whole, rather than just C, following the discourse conventions of a committee report. However, it is closer in wording to a question asked by R in his utterance at the beginning of the discussion about provision of transport for rural areas. He said,

> eh with reGARD to transportation of people on the rural areas (0.35) they will just SAY (0.49) we have THIS new government what change do we see on the ground there's absolutely no change (0.3) I'm still INstead (0.64) ER (0.61) I'm being PAY (0.14) a LOT of money for transportation (1.35) because their taxis that they use they're not subsiDISED in rural areas (0.46) there's no comprehensive PLAN (1.15) eh in PLACE (0.2) eh in terms of the BUSes (0.41) the KIND of buses that they use (0.16) inSTEAD (0.22) they USE (0.48) UNroadworthy buses that's why are experiencing a situation where there a LOT of (0.25) ACcidents that are taking place across the provinces

This utterance is clearly the source of the paragraph's reference to a 'comprehensive plan', 'taxis which are not subsidised by government' and 'the challenge of un-roadworthy buses'. The committee secretary chose to combine C's example of elderly pensioners being transported by wheelbarrow with R's utterance in the report. This indicates that the committee secretary interpreted the remainder of C's utterance as echoing and elaborating on R's utterance quoted above. Although R is meant to be non-partisan as a committee researcher, it was apparent that there had been a discussion between him and C prior to the meeting, and his agenda seemed closely aligned with C's, making it unsurprising that their contributions were condensed together in the report as one point.

By comparison to the report paragraph on co-ordination, the SD of the report paragraph on transport development for rural communities is fairly weak. While there are still some nominalisations in this paragraph, such as 'a comprehensive plan in the rural areas for public transport' (where 'plan' is a nominalisation of the Process 'to plan') and 'no adequate transportation for old people in the rural areas' (where 'transportation' is a nominalisation of the Process 'to transport'), there are also references to actual vehicles used to transport people, such as 'buses', 'taxis' and 'wheelbarrows'. Unlike in the paragraph on co-ordination, C's example is resemiotised, even though the place where she experienced it, Harding, is not mentioned. Thus much less condensation appears to have taken place in the production of this paragraph than in the production of the paragraph on co-ordination.

Insights from committee secretaries
In keeping with the methodological principles of linguistic ethnography and IS, we elicited participants' perspectives from parliamentary committee secretaries. We supplied a former parliamentary committee secretary, who we will call S1, with the transcript extracts discussed in this article and the corresponding extracts from the committee report, and asked her to comment on why D1 and C's utterances were resemiotised into the committee report in the way they were. She wrote 'I

refrain from using personal examples of members' stories in the reports [I] write because that's not how our minutes are written … instead I capture the essence or point that the member [wants] to say based on that story.' Another committee secretary, S2, said that he only includes examples in a report when a statement is unclear and the example clarifies it. In other words, an example would only be included when the process of rescaling it to a strong level of SD renders that example unduly difficult to understand for the reader.

S1 classified D1's example of his son in Emdeni as a personal story. She thought that the essence of this personal story was 'the lack of coordination of transport services which creates burdens for children'. This comment links D1's reference to his child with the broader topic of 'lack of co-ordination of transport services', and corroborates our analysis that D1 did not effectively rescale his concern about urban transport from his 'personal story' to a stronger level of SD, and so it was condensed together with the point that more integrated planning was required to ensure better service delivery.

By contrast, S1 wrote that C's example of people being transported in wheelbarrows warranted inclusion in the report because it was 'community specific or community based'. Thus, according to S2's perspective, C succeeded in having her concern from her constituency resemiotised into the report for two reasons. The first reason is that it refers non-specifically to unnamed members of the community and is thus 'community based' rather than a 'personal story', while D1's example referred to his son and thus was seen as 'personal'. The second reason is that C's example resonated with a concern more frequently expressed by the committee (most of whom, like her, are ANC members) than D1's concern about urban transport, expressed as an opposition MP. This second reason intersects with our analysis that C was able to rescale her concern very effectively to a strong level of SD using what Maton (2013) would term 'semantic waving', enabling this concern to be seen and treated as a general problem on a national scale. In doing so, she situated her example within existing discourses around the need for rural transport provision, while ensuring that it retained the emotive impact of a specific individual story, thus building a very powerful knowledge claim. By contrast, D1 was not able to do this since none of the other members of the committee were speaking about urban transport provision at the time.

S2 said that when he writes a committee report, he picks out key issues that form the focus areas of the meeting, and summarises those. He tries not to place more emphasis on the chairperson's words than on those of other MPs, and says that all MPs' concerns should be recorded, but he consolidates a few related concerns into one point in a report. This is precisely what happened to D1 and C's 'related concerns' about co-ordination in ensuring service delivery, as well as R and C's 'related concerns' about transport provision in rural areas. These 'related concerns' were condensed together, although the degree of condensation involved differed across the two sets of concerns. It appears that R and C's concerns about rural transport were much more closely related than D1 and C's concerns about co-ordination. This means that it was easier to condense R and C's concerns together. Also, because only one 'community-based' example appeared in R and C's talk on rural transport, that could be included in the report. Meanwhile in D1 and C's talk on co-ordination, two examples were used, and the committee secretary may as a result have chosen to include neither of them.

Therefore, D1's epistemologically weaker resemiotisation of a concern from his constituency was not resemiotised into the report in any degree of detail, while C's epistemologically more powerful resemiotisation was. This shows that the ability to build epistemologically powerful knowledge claims through semantic waving is an important competency for MPs to possess in order for them to represent their constituencies effectively in the parliamentary process. In the following section, we suggest that political parties should give specific training to their MPs to empower them to do this.

Conclusion: How to be a highly effective rescaler in parliament

This analysis has shown the benefits of a multi-stranded, interdisciplinary theoretical foundation to data collection and analysis in complex institutional settings such as parliament. The complexity of the context necessitates the use of a variety of theoretical frameworks to discover what is happening in a given interaction, and how participants could have improved the effectiveness of their own contributions. Throughout this section, we highlight the theoretical frameworks which have guided us to each of the conclusions we have drawn from the episode analysed in this article.

We have observed that MPs' resemiotisations of concerns from their constituencies in parliament are not simple retellings, but are used in strategic ways to enhance MPs' social power by identifying them with particular groups of people (Iedema 2003). MPs can claim the moral high ground or align themselves with powerful participants by claiming to represent those who are marginalised. Both D1 and C attempted to do this by using stories from their constituencies: D1 by identifying with the black working-class residents of Soweto (see above), and C by identifying with the inhabitants of Harding, a rural village on the margins of KwaZulu/Natal (see above).

In a linguistic ethnographic interview, A3 linked representation of her constituency to the committee reports, saying that she wanted to be able to point to each individual concern she raised in committee meetings in the reports, so that she could go back to her constituency and present the committee report as evidence that she had raised their concerns in parliament. However, as seen in this analysis, MPs often resemiotise concerns from their constituencies as concrete examples which they then rescale to a stronger level of SD, to use the terminology of LCT (Maton 2014). These concerns are vulnerable to omission from committee reports if they are not rescaled (Collins et al. 2009) adeptly in a way that makes their relevance to the current discussion in the committee meeting clearly apparent. One can observe, then, that the condensation of knowledge that occurs in the compilation of a committee report often hinders the resemiotisation of concerns from MPs' constituencies through the parliamentary process.

In the sections of this meeting that were analysed, C raised a concern from her constituency about improvement of rural transport, and this appeared to be resemiotised further along the genre chain of the parliamentary process than the concern that D1 raised about the need for improvement in urban public transport. There appear to be two related reasons why this happened.

The first of these relates to the ways in which C and D1 framed their local concerns and rescaled them to apply them to the matters of national relevance being discussed in the committee. This can be understood by examining their utterances using LCT. C succeeded in using a semantic wave to produce an epistemologically powerful knowledge claim out of her concern from her constituency, while D1 did not do this because he relayed his concern using what were essentially two semantic flatlines, meaning that there was a degree of discord between his example and the semantically denser comments that contextualised it.

The second set of reasons for the failure of D1's concern to be resemiotised effectively along the genre chain of the committee process probably has to do with the way in which it was framed by other utterances in the meeting. This can be revealed through viewing the interaction through the perspectives of critical ethnography and IS. C was seen as agreeing with D1 in her utterance after his utterance on co-ordination between spheres of government, and the entire discussion was perceived by participants as harmonious, as revealed through our ethnographic interviews with participants. However, C broadened the topic of discussion and added an example of her own to it, and as a result the committee secretary needed to abstract away from the details of both utterances and condense both together at a much stronger level of SD in the report. C might have spoken as she did in a purposeful attempt to 'redirect' the committee's discourse away from aspects of D1's concerns that she was not interested in addressing at the time because they came from an opposition MP, or she may simply have been adding her opinion to that of D1. Meanwhile, C's concern about developing rural public transport resonated closely with those of other speakers in the meeting, such as R, meaning that it would have been less difficult to condense together with their utterances than D1's utterance on co-ordination would have been to condense together with C's. As the chairperson of the committee and a member of the majority party, C held much greater social power than D1 and thus there was a proportionately higher chance that other committee members would agree with her and her utterance would be seen as following the general thread of committee discourse rather than going against it.

A critical ethnographic perspective reveals that although the committee secretaries say that they do not give added prominence to the chairperson's concerns above those of ordinary committee members, C had the last word in both the discussion on co-ordination and the discussion on rural transport by virtue of her position as chairperson, and so was able to use her social power to ensure that her framing of a particular issue was more epistemologically powerful (Maton and Moore 2010) than those of other MPs, and was remembered by the committee secretaries when compiling their reports. Thus unequal

relations of social power within the committee can influence the degree of epistemological power with which MPs are able to present their knowledge claims, affecting how their utterances are resemiotised into committee reports. There is, in fact, often unconscious competition between different MPs over whose concerns are resemiotised into the committee reports in the most detail.

This analysis demonstrates how condensation of knowledge in the process of producing a committee report may hinder the ability of certain concerns to be resemiotised along the genre chain of the parliamentary process. This effect is even more problematic when it occurs after meetings that appeared completely harmonious to all participants, as the one in this analysis did, because in these circumstances, the MPs would subject the committee report to less scrutiny, not expecting their concerns to be misrepresented or under-represented. Reports of less harmonious meetings are likely to be scrutinised far more intensively to ensure that each MP and party's position is faithfully resemiotised.

Our commitment to critical ethnography demands that we search for the practical applications these conclusions have for improving communication in parliament's committee meetings and ensuring equitable power relations in these meetings (May 1997). Some such applications are apparent, even though this cannot claim to be a fully representative study of the ways in which concerns from MPs' constituencies are communicated through the parliamentary process. If we assume that miscommunication is a failure of recontextualisation in some form, then ensuring that citizens' concerns are recontextualised more accurately through the parliamentary process would improve communication in parliament as a whole. To this end, MPs need training in how to utilise a broad range of styles from their repertoires strategically in this process of raising a concern and then rescaling it (Collins et al. 2009).

Secondly, it would be good for committee secretaries to be trained to develop a keen sense for the imbalances in social power that occur in the committees, and pay attention to all members' contributions when compiling committee minutes and reports. Training that makes both MPs and committee secretaries aware of the difficult, non-straightforward nature of resemiotisation in parliament and its attendant dynamics of social and epistemological power could further the cause of representative democracy as a whole by helping MPs to represent their constituencies better, and helping committee secretaries to reflect their representations in a more equitable manner.

Notes

[1] 'Process', is used as a technical term in Systemic Functional Linguistics, denoting the meaning usually carried by the main and auxiliary verbs in a clause. Processes are classified into six types: Material Processes (e.g. 'sit', 'walk'), Behavioural Processes (e.g. 'laugh', 'sleep'), Relational Processes (e.g. 'is' in 'The painting is beautiful'), Existential Processes (e.g. 'is' in 'It is raining'), Mental Processes (e.g. 'think', 'feel') and Verbal Processes (e.g. 'say', 'exclaim'). Mental Processes and Verbal Processes are known as projecting Processes, because they introduce (or project) information about what the Subject thought or said, usually in the form of clauses or nominal groups/noun phrases (Bloor and Bloor 2004). For ease of reference, all labels from Systemic Functional Linguistics are written with initial capital letters.

[2] Transcription conventions:
    CAPS   syllables receiving phrasal stress
    <….>   softer utterances
    […..]   overlaps
    (0.93)   pauses (measured in seconds)
    ( )   unclear speech on recording
    (*italics*) non-verbal noises, e.g. coughs, laughter

[3] We wish to thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

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